

NEW YORK TIMES  
10 AUGUST 1980

# The Truth About The Afghanistan Crisis

Published by THE CHURCHMAN, founded 1804, journal of religious humanism, dedicated to the cause of peace.

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**L**et us call things by their right names and practice what we preach.

Let's begin with a few facts about Afghanistan. 1) Afghanistan and the U.S.S.R. share an almost 2,000 mile border and an ideological orientation to Marxism. 2) Since December 1978 there has existed a treaty of friendship and cooperation between them, relating to economic, political and military affairs. 3) Under this treaty some 5,000 Soviet civilian and military advisers were openly in Afghanistan long before Soviet troops arrived. 4) The U.N. delegate (Ambassador) from Afghanistan under President Amin, who continued to serve under President Karmal, officially confirmed to the U.N. that the Afghanistan government had requested the troops. A civil war had been going on for more than a year. The rebel forces were increasingly aided from across the border with Pakistan, and the authority of Amin's leadership was clearly weakening.

The same Revolutionary Council that had installed and removed Amin, installed Karmal, who, with Amin and Taraki, had been a leader in the Marxist-oriented revolution of April 1978. Even if we assume that Amin got a raw deal from the Revolutionary Council in his sudden trial and execution, this is part of *their* system, and the U.S.S.R. is *their* ally.

One may well regret that any country chooses to have foreign troops and foreign advisers. Think how many countries have chosen ours. But no one can deny that it is the legal right of all sovereign states to choose their own allies and make treaties involving military aid. We ourselves have 60 allies by treaty, and more than 400 important foreign bases occupied by many hundreds of thousands of our troops, and President Carter said in the U.N. on October 4, 1977 that we would use nuclear weapons against any "conventional attack on the U.S., our territories, our armed forces, or our allies." For our government to condemn Soviet troops in Afghanistan as a "criminal invasion" is a classic instance of the double standard. Anyone who repeats the term "invasion" in this context is clearly denying that Afghanistan and the Soviet Union have the same legal rights as other members of the United Nations.

## War Danger Increases

The American public is today being hoodwinked into using a word which is increasing the danger of an omnicidal nuclear war. I mean the word "invasion" instead of "intervention" in referring to Afghanistan. The difference between these two words is a qualitative one in every sense—legal, moral and political. Invasion is by definition illegal and immoral; it is something that could not have been invited, and must necessarily be judged as criminal aggression. In contrast, intervention can be legal, and even moral; it can be invited, whether wisely or unwisely. The whole point is that a legal but possibly unwise intervention can be made to seem like a criminal threat to world peace only if it is fraudulently cried up as "invasion."

The U.N. delegates were all well aware of these important distinctions when they passed their General Assembly Resolution of January 14. But our public had by that time been sufficiently brainwashed not to notice that the word "invasion" was never used—neither in the General Assembly Resolution that was passed, nor in the Security Council resolution that was vetoed. The word "intervention" was used throughout in both, in recognition of undeniable facts.

The U.N. General Assembly not only refused to use the word "invasion" referring instead to Soviet "in-

tervention", but its resolution also specifically refrained from "condemning" the intervention, using instead the milder term "deplore", although our delegation argued mightily for "condemn." In spite of these facts our government goes on endlessly repeating the false claim that the U.N. "condemned" the Soviet "invasion" of Afghanistan.

The reason for the persistence of this deliberate brainwashing is painfully evident. It is the best and quickest way to get the public to accept bigger military budgets, new foreign bases, draft registration, the "tough" images of shelving SALT II, scuttling detente, returning to the cold war, resurrecting one-sided "containment", declaring the Persian Gulf and its oil our national interest, threatening nuclear war to keep the Soviet "invaders" out, and re-electing Carter, the man eager to apply this whole born-again policy "around the world", as he stated in his Carter Doctrine address.

What has thus become of first importance in Afghanistan is not the treaty-based military intervention of the U.S.S.R., but the way this intervention is being deliberately exaggerated and falsified in order to brainwash and stampede our public to the very brink of nuclear holocaust. To reject this brainwash and stampede is not to condone Soviet policy; it is to refuse to allow *our* foreign policy to be dictated by the Pentagon and implemented by the C.I.A.

## World Peace Is Possible

From the point of view of justice, of respect for international law and concern for world peace, on what terms should we urge an end to the civil war in Afghanistan? Simply withdrawing the Soviet troops would not end the war, but would only restore it to the original belligerents, with each side receiving aid from across the borders.

If we are interested in peace under international law, why not urge entering into discussion with the Soviets on the basis of their offer to withdraw their troops if we will join an international guarantee of Afghanistan's borders? If we are interested in preventing the mutual annihilation that would result from nuclear war in the Persian Gulf or anywhere else, why not urge acceptance of the twice-made offer (1976, 1979) of the U.S.S.R. to conclude a treaty of no-first-use of nuclear weapons? If the best basis for world peace is equality of rights and a single standard among nations, why not urge the withdrawal of our own Guantanamo forces from Cuba at the same time that we urge the withdrawal of the Soviet troops in Afghanistan?

Let us practice what we preach, and call things by their right names.

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